



U.S. Department of Justice

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PRESS RELEASE

Richard S. Hartunian, United States Attorney for the Northern District of New York, announced today plans for his office's efforts to ensure that all qualified voters have the opportunity to cast their ballots and have their votes counted, without discrimination, intimidation or fraud, in the upcoming general elections on Tuesday, November 2, 2010. Assistant United States Attorney Robert P. Storch has been appointed to serve as the District Election Officer for the Northern District of New York and, in that capacity, will be responsible for overseeing the District's handling of complaints of election fraud and voting rights abuses in consultation with U.S. Department of Justice headquarters in Washington, D.C.

The goals of the ongoing Ballot Access and Voting Integrity Initiative are to increase the Department of Justice's ability to deter election fraud and discrimination at the polls and to prosecute these offenses whenever and wherever they occur -- essentially to make voting easier and cheating harder. It is imperative that, in pursuing voter integrity, ballot access is not in any way diminished or harmed. The Department's long-standing Election Day Program furthers the goals of this Initiative. The Program also is intended to ensure public confidence in the integrity of the election process by providing local points of contact within the Department where the public can report possible election fraud and voting rights violations while the polls are open on election day. The Program is based on the fundamental principle that the right to vote is the cornerstone of American democracy, and it seeks to ensure that those who are entitled to the franchise exercise it, while those who seek to corrupt it are brought to justice.

In order to respond to complaints of election fraud or voting rights abuses on November 2, 2010, and to ensure that such complaints are directed to the appropriate authorities, United States Attorney Hartunian stated that DEO Storch and other U.S. Attorney's Office personnel will be on duty in this District while the polls are open. They can be reached by the public at telephone number (518) 431-0247.

The FBI will also have Special Agents available in each field office and resident agency in this District to receive allegations of election fraud and other election abuses. The FBI can be reached by the public at the following telephone numbers: (518) 465-7551 (Albany and Eastern NY counties), (315) 422-0141 (Syracuse and Central NY counties) or (607) 722-5321 (Binghamton and Southern Tier counties).

Complaints about ballot access problems or discrimination can be made directly to the Voting Section of the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division in Washington at telephone numbers 1-800-253-3931 (TTY line 1-877-267-8971).

In addition, individuals can also report complaints, problems or concerns relating to voting via the Internet. Forms may be submitted through a link on the Department's Web page: www.justice.gov.

United States Attorney Hartunian said: "My office is committed to protecting the right to vote, and electoral fraud dilutes the worth of votes honestly cast and strikes at the heart of our representative form of government. As crimes against both individuals and the government itself, such conduct will be dealt with promptly and aggressively. Anyone who has information suggesting electoral fraud or voting rights abuses should make that information available immediately to my office, the FBI, or the Civil Rights Division."